

THE NEGRO SMITH SCORES POPULIST JOHNSON.

When the bill to amend the Election Law was before the House, June 13th, Mr. Johnson, Populist, from Sampson, sent forward some proposed amendments and made a speech, from which the following extract is taken:

"I am not here to defend the negro race. I believe in all candor that they ought never to have been given the right to vote. Being ignorant and just freed from bondage, they were unfit to exercise the right of suffrage. I believe also that the white man has inherited the qualifications that make him fit for and capable of self-rule. Many of those who shouldered their muskets and fought in the late war for home and country—many of the best people to-day in North Carolina—cannot read and write. They have ruled, and they will rule under all circumstances, and I hope to see the day when the Anglo-Saxon race will be supreme over all the earth."

Mr. Justice, of McDowell, made reply to Mr. Johnson.

He was followed by Isaac Smith, Craven county's well-known colored Representative, who wanted to ask Mr. Johnson (Populist), of Sampson, a question.

ISAAC SMITH AND JOHNSON.

"Do you represent the idea of the Populist party when you say the negro has no right to vote?" demanded the colored Republican of the white Populist.

"I said he ought not to have been given that right at the time it was given," replied Johnson.

"But that is not what I asked you," persisted Smith. "In expressing that sentiment, do you speak as an individual, or do you express the sentiment of your party?"

"I speak as a representative of the white people of North Carolina," loftily replied Johnson.

"No you don't; no you don't," broke in Smith. "These are the white folks," pointing to the Democratic side.

The statement was greeted with a thunder of applause and hand-clapping that lasted several seconds.

"I had another question," continued Smith, "that I wanted to ask the gentleman, but he evaded answering the first one, and he'll evade this. So I won't ask it."

"What is the highest crime in the catalogue of crimes?" he asked, and answered by saying, "It is ingratitude."

"The gentleman from Sampson holds a certificate and warms his seat now by votes from my race. His party—if he has a party—has in the Senate to-day a representative that is there by negro votes. I refer to Senator Butler, whom we put there in connection with your little pint."

"When you get up here (speaking to Mr. Johnson) and talk as you have to-day, do you know what you remind me of? Why, of a horse that you get for nothing, and then you ride him and ride him and half-feed him, and finally turn him loose, and say he's no good; anyhow. That's the way you Populists have done my race. We have elected them to good fat offices; we've made them Governor—the returns in the office of the Secretary of State show it—and now you turn and tell us we ought never to have been allowed to vote, anyhow."

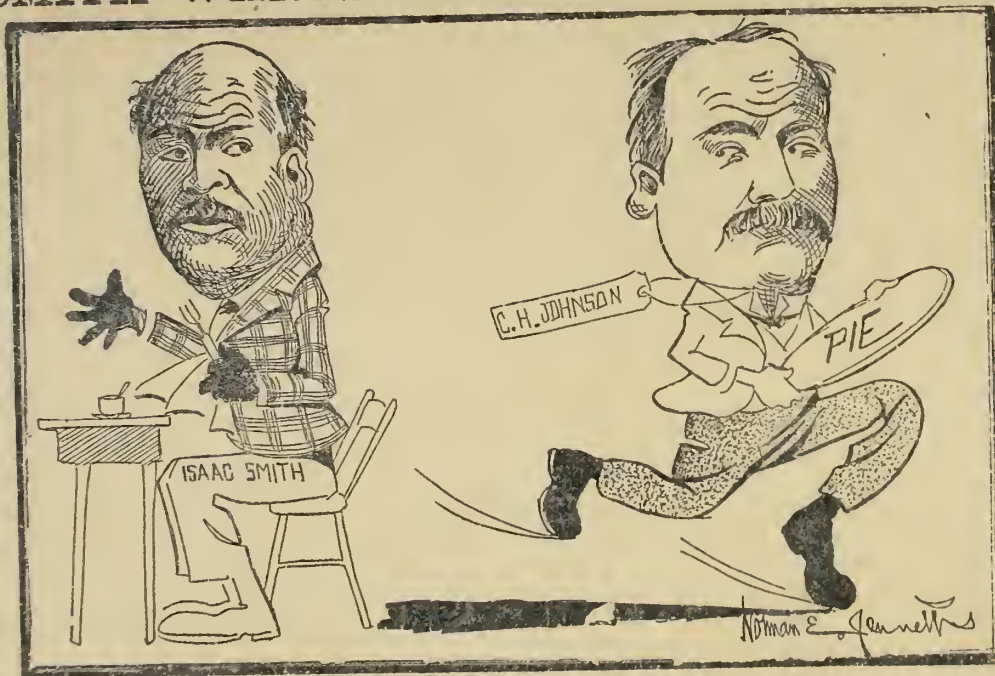
ALL WHITE FOLKS NOT ALIKE.

"Why so fast. Maybe we can still do you a little good. Better not turn us out too soon, like an old horse that has faithfully served you."

"I tell you, all white folks ain't alike, nohow. Why, these white folks (pointing to the Democrats) are different from you. If we had done so much for them they'd at least speak a kind word for us. That's more than you do. We've always opposed them in politics, yet they do much for us. For you we've done much, and you might at least keep quiet, or at most, not say more against us. Amen when somebody else abuses us."

(OVER)

SMITH WANTS FAIR DIVISION OF PIE!



DEBATE IN THE LEGISLATURE ON THE ELECTION LAW.

Isaac Smith, Republican Leader, to C. H. Johnson, Populist Leader—"That's the way you Populists have done my race. We have elected them to good offices, we've made them Governor, and now you turn and tell us we ought never to have been allowed to vote, anyhow."

(107111)

N. C. Collection
Library
University of N. C.